

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07 OES-06 ERDA-05 NRC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2911

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 15352

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA

SUBJECT: REENACTMENT OF HIROSHIMA BOMBING

SUMMARY. MEDIA STORIES BASED ON AP REPORTS OF "REENACTMENT" OF HIROSHIMA BOMBING AT WEEKEND TEXAS AIRSHOW HAVE THUS FAR OCCASIONED SEVERAL PROTESTS, PROMPTED FOREIGN MINISTER TO PROMISE APPROPRIATE ACTION AFTER INVESTIGATION, AND STIMULATED KEEN INTEREST IN EMBASSY REACTION ON PART OF RESIDENT WESTERN JOURNALISTS. EMBOFF HAS BEEN CALLED TO FONOFF OCTOBER 14 FOR "PRESENTATION" CONCERNING MATTER. FOR USE AT FONOFF AND WITH REPORTERS, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE TO RESPOND TO INQUIRIES CONCERNING INCIDENT. END SUMMARY.

1. ALL VERNACULAR PAPERS OCTOBER 12 CARRIED AP REPORT OF "REENACTMENT" OF HIROSHIMA BOMBING AT WEEKEND TEXAS AIRSHOW. REPORTS INDICATED RETIRED USAF GENERAL PAUL TIBBETS THRICE REENACTED BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA BEFORE SOME 40,000 ONLOOKERS WHO HAD PAID \$5 ADMISSION FEE. US ARMY DEMOLITION TEAM REPORTEDLY SET OFF CONVENTIONAL EXPLOSIVES ON GROUND WHICH PRODUCED MUSHROOM CLOUD. ARTICLE ALSO INCLUDED TIBBETS' STATEMENT THAT HE HAD NO REGRETS WHATSOEVER.

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2. MATTER WAS TAKEN UP IN DIET SAME DAY AND FONMIN KOSAKA IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT EVEN THOUGH EVENT TOOK PLACE AT AIRSHOW, AMERICANS WERE "TOO INSENSITIVE." HE PROMISED APPROPRIATE ACTION AFTER THOROUGH INVESTIGATION. EMBOFF HAS BEEN CALLED TO FONOFF AT 1000, OCTOBER 14, FOR FONOFF "PRESENTATION" CONCERNING MATTER.
3. PUBLIC PROTESTS HAVE BEEN LODGED BY HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI CHAPTERS OF A-BOMB VICTIMS ORGANIZATIONS, HIROSHIMA LABOR FEDERATION, AND HIROSHIMA HEADQUARTERS OF JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NUMBER OF CABLES AND WAS VISITED OCTOBER 13 BY REPRESENTATIVES OF NAGASAKI MAYOR TO PROTEST EVENT AND CALL FOR ACCEPTABLE EXPLANATION. HIROSHIMA MAYOR HAS ALSO PUBLICLY DEPLORED EVENT AND PROMISED TO CONVEY INDIGNATION OF HIROSHIMA PEOPLE TO US GOVERNMENT THROUGH EMBASSY.
4. PRESS ATTACHE AND OTHER EMBOFFS HAVE HAD SEVERAL CALLS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF WESTERN PRESS, ALL SEEKING EMBASSY REACTION, INFORMATION ABOUT ANY FONOFF ACTION AND PROTESTS TO DATE, AND LIKELY EMBASSY RESPONSE. THUS FAR, WE HAVE SAID WE WERE SURPRISED BY EVENT AND SAID WE WERE SEEKING FURTHER FACTS.
5. COMMENT. WE EXPECT INTEREST IN MATTER WILL FURTHER INTENSIFY IN VIEW OF EXTRAORDINARY JAPANESE SENSITIVITY. WE WOULD, THEREFORE, APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE CONCERNING MATTER AND GUIDANCE WHICH MIGHT BE USED AT FOREIGN OFFICE AND WITH PRESS. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IF WE COULD DISSOCIATE USG FROM EVENT, RECOGNIZE SPECIAL JAPANESE SENSITIVITIES CONCERNING NUCLEAR WEAPONS, DEPLORE OCCURENCE OF EVENT, AND REGRET ANY OFFENSE TO SENSIBILITIES OF JAPANESE AND OTHERS THROUGHOUT WORLD.
6. TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE, WE WOULD HAVE TO RECEIVE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE IN TIME FOR 1000 FONOFF APPOINTMENT. HODGSON

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